

Worksite Wellness Success Stories

May 2007

Smart Commuting Gaining Popularity in DEQ



Gas prices exceeding the \$3.50 per gallon mark helped motivate many employees of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to participate in the second annual *2007 Smart Commute Challenge*. The Challenge was a fun competition. Companies or organizations registered as a team. There were four team categories: mini, small, medium and large. Employees received a point each time they Smart Commute to work: car pooling, riding a bus or bike, or walking. For each team category, the highest cumulative percentage of smart commutes out of the total number of employees of the company or organization was the winner.

To make the Challenge a little more competitive, many divisions within the DEQ registered as a team. Last year, the DEQ's Environmental Science & Services Division, Land & Water Management Division and Air Quality Division, took first, second and third place, respectively, in the large category. *So there was a silver lining in the rising gas prices. It was just the incentive many of us needed to find a more healthy and less polluting way of getting to work.*

You'll have to check out the Mid-Michigan Environmental Action Council's web site @ <http://www.midmeac.org/challenge.html> to find this year's winners.



Robert Alway, who works in the DEQ Kalamazoo District Office makes about 75 smart commute trips a year on his recumbent tricycle. One of the side benefits of his 16 mile round trip through the back roads is the view of beautiful natural landscapes and wildlife.

(at right) Kevin Goodwin (DEQ - Lansing) became involved in the *Smart Commute Challenge* in 2006 as a part of "Team Water Bureau" and decided to do the same in 2007, but with a twist. Goodwin said, "Since I bike to work most days anyway, I wanted to mirror the efforts that others might be making for the first time by challenging myself to ride something different each day of the first week: a scooter, roller blades, kids bike, mountain bike, and my commuting bike... I'm glad to be back to my commuting bike this week"!



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